

Mr. Hogan,

I strongly feel that Canadian fishermen have had a significant impact on my fishing business. I can say with certain that the encounters that I have had with these fishermen are far too numerous to list. I will leave good fishing grounds in order to find areas that are not infected by these “fishermen?”. Captains cannot always be at the helm. We have to maintain the refrigeration, aux. engines, bait pumps, and main engines. Most times when Canadians show up to an area they go straight for a guy and fish as close to them as possible. I guess the thinking is that the fish must be right there and that is why the boat is there. And one Canadian can be avoided, but when they multiply around you, it is just far too dangerous to leave the helm to check on our machinery.

My time in this fishery is not as extent as some of the older guys in this fishery. But from my experience, I don’t believe I ever need to go to Canada to make my living. I have gone to Canada in search of fish before and it has never paid off. I strongly feel that I would benefit far more from the lack of Canadian effort in US waters than I would ever benefit in my lifetime (or my kids lifetime) being able to go to Canada.

The lopsided benefits of our current treaty is obvious. Look up in US fishing vessel logbook data and total up the number of days US vessels spent in Canadian waters (using any length of time; i.e. last 5 years). Compare that to the number of days that Canadian vessels spent in US waters. The numbers you will find is staggering. These Canadian vessels are directly impacting US albacore fishing operations. And our impact in their waters is trivial. Why should US fishermen and their country’s economy bear the brunt of this treaty?

With current prices of albacore on the rise and at historical all time highs, we are also under the threat of illegal fishing in the US EEZ. Canada has nothing to lose by looking the other way when it comes to their own fishermen fishing illegally in US waters. It is up to us to protect our fishermen and our country’s resource. Every time we turn around someone in government is saying “we don’t have the funding”. There is no better way to simplify the enforcement issue with Canadian fishermen than to close the border. I strongly feel that from the numbers of Canadian vessels that we are seeing on the grounds just does not match up to the numbers allowed in the treaty.

I will guarantee you one thing, the extra money that US fishermen will make from not having to fish around the Canadian fleet in the US EEZ will be spent in the United States of America. The miniscule amount that the Canadian fleet puts into the US economy does not compare to the amount they are taking back to the Canadian economy. This is revenue generated from a US resource.

Thank you for reading me and my family’s feelings about the US-Canadian relationship.

-Eric, Paige, Nicole and Kjirstin Hopper

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